



# IOWA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

## Guidance on the Iowa Teacher Leadership and Compensation System

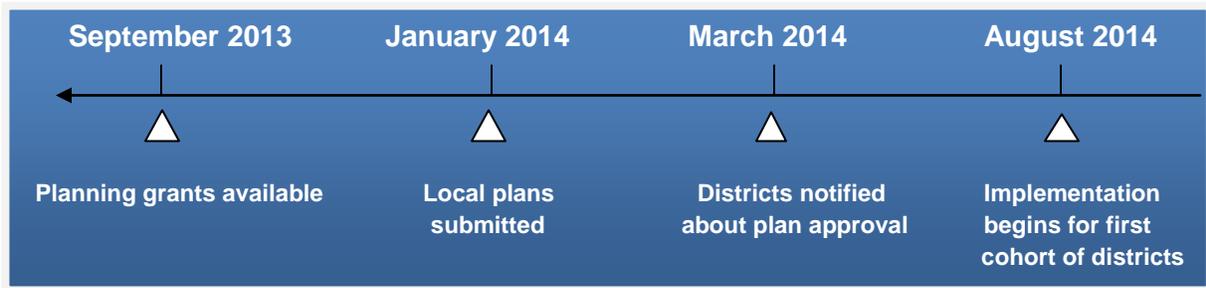
July 15, 2013

### → Overview

Division VII of House File 215 establishes the Teacher Leadership and Compensation System, as well as the Teacher Leadership Supplement (TLS) of categorical funding. This guidance is designed to help education stakeholders with the following:

- **Develop a vision and goals for the system.**
- **Fund and enter the system.**
- **Design a system that meets the needs of the local school community.**

This guidance provides information on the options available to participating school districts, the legislatively specified requirements, and other related items, such as the Iowa Department of Education's plan for supporting school districts as they develop their teacher leadership and compensation systems. In August, the Department will release additional details about the planning funds available to school districts this year. The Department also will hold regional information sessions and webinars in the early fall. The tentative timeline looks like this:



### → Developing a Vision and Goals

As with all new educational endeavors, the most important place to begin is with the guiding vision and the goals the system is designed to achieve. Otherwise, it is all too easy to fall into compliance mode. In compliance mode, schools ask, "Are we allowed to do x?" instead of first asking, "Does x fit with the purpose of what we are trying to accomplish?" To be clear, the rules of the system are important (and this guidance letter devotes ample space to explaining the rules). At the same time, though, we believe the most effective locally developed teacher leadership systems will begin the work by setting a clear vision and concrete goals.

School districts need not work to set a vision and goals in isolation, nor must they start from scratch. Iowa's Task Force on Teacher Leadership and Compensation provided an initial vision of a transformed teaching profession with greater support and more career opportunities for teachers. The task force offered its vision in a theory of action to describe what teacher leadership and compensation was designed to accomplish, why the task force made its recommendations, and how these actions would improve outcomes for all students in Iowa.

### **Theory of Action:**

*If we effectively compensate teachers; recruit and promote excellent teachers and provide support as they collaborate reflectively to refine their practice; create the political will and understanding necessary to remake the status of the teaching profession; give highly effective teachers opportunities to grow, refine, and share their expertise; and develop a clear system with quality implementation, then ... student learning will increase, student outcomes will improve, and students will be prepared to succeed in a globally competitive environment.*

The intended goals of the Teacher Leadership and Compensation System, as described by both the legislation and the task force, are as follows:

- Attract able and promising new teachers by offering competitive starting salaries and offering short-term and long-term professional development and leadership opportunities.
- Retain effective teachers by providing enhanced career opportunities.
- Promote collaboration by developing and supporting opportunities for teachers in schools and school districts statewide to learn from each other.
- Reward professional growth and effective teaching by providing pathways for career opportunities that come with increased leadership responsibilities and involve increased compensation.
- Improve student achievement by strengthening instruction.

Now, the work passes to school districts in Iowa to build upon this foundation to design systems that meet each community's needs. Over the next year, the Department will continue to develop materials to inform and support districts in designing a high-impact, locally tailored system.

## → Funding and Entering the System

### **Planning Grants**

The teacher leadership and compensation legislation creates a **four-year process** to develop a statewide teacher leadership and compensation system. In the first year, the 2013-14 school year, the Legislature has appropriated **\$3.5 million for**

**planning grants** that each school district will use to facilitate a local decision-making process (which should include administrators, teachers, and parents and guardians of students) to design a teacher leadership system that meets the requirements of the legislation and considers the local context.

In September, the Department of Education will provide school districts with an application form to request a planning grant, as well as information about amounts available to each district. The intent is that all school districts applying for a planning grant will receive the money. All school districts are encouraged to apply for a planning grant as this money is not appropriated for subsequent years. Districts that request a planning grant are NOT required to submit an application to implement their plans during the 2014-15 school year. However, additional planning grants likely will not be available in coming years.

▪ All school districts are encouraged to apply for a planning grant as this money is not appropriated for subsequent years.

## Phased-In Entry

Following the planning year, **\$50 million** will be available per year for the 2014-15, 2015-16, and 2016-17 school years for school districts to implement the teacher leadership and compensation system.

When the program is fully implemented in the 2016-17 school year, the state's contribution will be \$150 million per year, plus an annual growth factor (though participation in the system will be optional).

In the coming months, the Department of Education will work with the Commission on Teacher Leadership and Compensation to develop a process by which districts will submit their plans for approval. **Details on the submission process will be available this fall.**

The deadline to submit a plan for approval for the 2014-15 school year likely will be in **January 2014**. Districts will then be notified in **March 2014** if their plans are approved for the 2014-15 school year.

The \$50 million in funding is available for districts serving one-third of the students in Iowa to enter the system each year beginning in the 2014-15 school year. The funding will be distributed on a per-pupil basis, which will be calculated by the Department of Management by dividing the allocation amount for FY15 by one-third of the statewide total budget enrollment for FY15 (this payment is estimated to be \$310 per student for each district with an approved plan).

Beginning in FY16 and succeeding years, the **Teacher Leadership Supplement (TLS)** includes the supplemental state aid amount for the budget year. Districts are eligible to receive TLS funding when the district's plan for teacher leadership is approved by the Department of Education.

In the first year a school district implements its approved plan, payments flow from the \$50 million allocation. For that year, the district's funding is the product of the teacher leadership district cost per pupil for the school year (i.e. roughly \$310), multiplied by the school district's budget enrollment.

In subsequent years, the Teacher Leadership Supplement (TLS) becomes a categorical funding stream included on the aid and levy worksheet.

### Funding Timeline

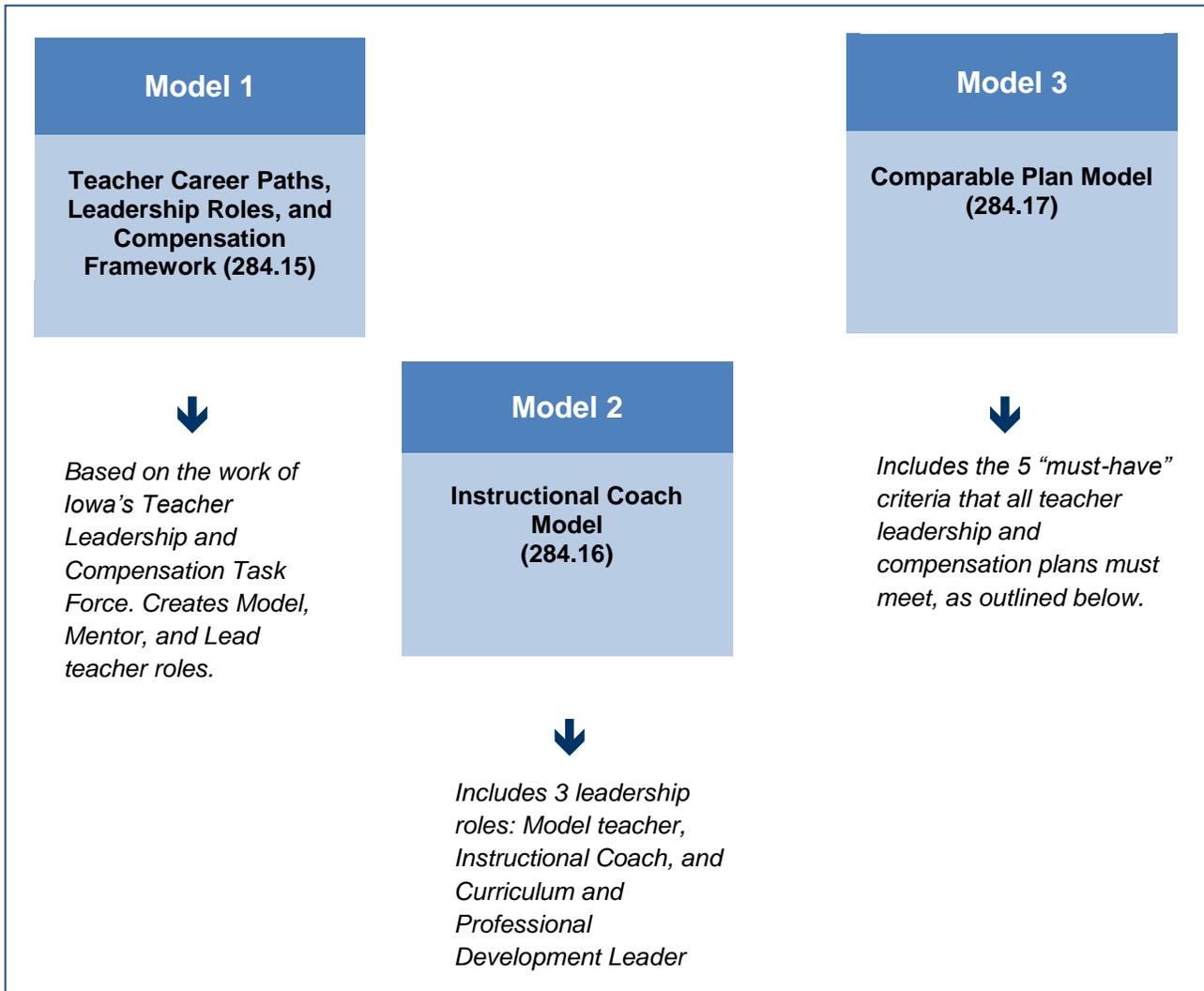
- **2013-14:** \$3.5 million in planning grants available to school districts
- **2014-15, 2015-16, 2016-17:** \$50 million per year for school district implementation
- **2016-17:** State contributes \$150 million per year, plus annual growth factor

### Timeline for Plan Approval

- **Fall 2013:** State provides details about the process by which districts will submit plans for approval
- **January 2014:** Districts submit plans for approval for the 2014-15 school year
- **March 2014:** Districts are notified if their plans are approved

## → District Options for Designing a Local System

The legislation describes three approaches districts can take in designing a local teacher leadership and compensation system:



**NOTE: School districts that do not have a teacher leadership and compensation system approved by the Department of Education are not required to implement any components of the three options described below and will not receive TLS funds.**

Once school districts have set the vision and goals for a teacher leadership and compensation system in their own communities, they may find it beneficial to then consider the criteria described in the comparable system approach. These criteria include **the five "must-haves"** of all approved teacher leadership and compensation systems in Iowa:

- **Minimum Salary of \$33,500:** All approved plans must include a minimum salary of \$33,500 for all full-time teachers.
- **Improved Entry into the Profession:** Additional coaching, mentoring, and opportunities for observing exceptional instructional practice for new teachers (and veteran teachers where and when appropriate).

- **Differentiated, Multiple, Meaningful Teacher Leadership Roles:** These roles must extend beyond the initial teacher and career teacher levels; include additional contract days with compensation commensurate with the responsibilities for the leadership role; and the district must demonstrate a good-faith effort of selecting at least 25 percent of the teacher workforce to serve in leadership roles. These leadership roles may include, but are not be limited to:

- **Instructional coaches** who engage full-time or part-time in instructional coaching.
- **Peer coaches** who provide additional guidance in one or more aspects of the teaching profession to other teachers during normal non-instructional time (peer coaches may be used only as one element of a more extensive teacher leadership plan).
- **Curriculum and professional development leaders** who engage full-time or part-time in the planning, development, and implementation of curriculum and professional development.
- **Model teachers** who teach full-time and serve as models of exemplary teaching practice.
- **Mentor teachers** who teach full-time or part-time and also support the professional development of initial and career teachers.
- **Lead teachers**, who teach full-time or part-time and also plan and deliver professional development activities or engage in other activities designed to improve instructional strategies.

- **Rigorous Selection Process for Leadership Roles:** The process for placement into, and retention in, teacher leadership roles shall include all of the following components:
  - **Selection Criteria:** Districts must develop and use measures of effectiveness and professional growth to determine suitability for teacher leadership roles.
  - **Selection Process:** A selection committee that includes teachers and administrators to accept and review applications for assignment or reassignment to a teacher leadership role and to make recommendations regarding the applications to the superintendent.
  - **Annual Review of Assignment:** The review shall include peer feedback on the effectiveness of the teacher's performance of duties specific to the teacher's leadership role. A teacher who completes the time period of assignment to a leadership role may apply for assignment in a new leadership role, or for reassignment to that role.
  - **Experience:** Teachers assigned to a leadership role must have at least three years of teaching experience and at least one year of experience in the school district.

#### 5 "Must-Haves" for Local Plans:

- Minimum salary of \$33,500
- For new teachers: Additional coaching, mentoring, and opportunities for observing instructional practice
- Differentiated, multiple, meaningful teacher leadership roles
- Rigorous selection process for leadership roles
- Aligned professional development

- **Aligned Professional Development:** School districts must implement a professional development system facilitated by teachers and other education experts and aligned with the Iowa Professional Development Model.

The comparable system criteria enable school districts to customize the teacher career pathways models (284.15) and the instructional coach model (284.16) or to create a locally designed approach to meet its unique needs. Below you will find detailed descriptions of both the teacher career pathways model and instructional coach model. Again, districts can make adjustments to these models as long as those adjustments fit within the bounds of the comparable system criteria.

**Teacher Career Pathways (284.15):** This option includes the initial and career teacher levels, plus three additional teacher leadership pathways.

Teacher Career Pathways	
<b>Initial Teacher</b>	<p><b>Salary:</b> The salary for an initial teacher (which is defined as a teacher who has successfully completed an approved practitioner preparation program or holds an initial or intern teacher license and who participates in the initial teacher mentoring and induction program) shall be at least \$33,500. In addition, \$33,500 also becomes the new minimum salary for all teachers.</p> <p><b>Residency Year:</b> Initial teachers must complete a teacher residency during the first year of employment that has all of the following characteristics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Mentoring:</b> Intensive supervision or mentoring by a mentor teacher or lead teacher.</li> <li>• <b>Collaboration:</b> Sufficient collaboration time for the initial teacher in the residency year to be able to observe and learn from model teachers, mentor teachers, and lead teachers employed by school districts located in this state.</li> <li>• <b>Extended Contract:</b> A teaching contract issued that is five days longer than the contract for career teachers employed by the school district of employment. The five additional contract days shall be used to strengthen instructional leadership in accordance with this subsection.</li> <li>• <b>Observation, Evaluation, and Support:</b> Frequent observation, evaluation, and professional development opportunities.</li> </ul>
<b>Career Teacher</b>	<p>A career teacher holds a statement of professional recognition issued under Chapter 272 or meets all of the following requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has successfully completed the initial teacher mentoring and induction program and has successfully completed a comprehensive evaluation.</li> <li>• Has demonstrated the competencies of a career teacher as determined under the school district's comprehensive evaluation of the initial teacher.</li> </ul>

- Holds a valid license issued under Chapter 272.
- Participates in teacher professional development as set forth in this chapter and demonstrates continuous improvement in teaching.

**Model Teacher**

**Qualifications:** A model teacher meets the requirements of a career teacher, has met the requirements established by the school district that employs the teacher, and is evaluated by the school district as demonstrating the competencies of a model teacher.

**Selection:** Participation in a rigorous review process and selected by a site-based review council (see section on site-based review council for a description of the review process)

**Length of Assignment:** One year.

**Participation Percentage and Partnerships:** At least 10 percent of teachers in the school district should be designated as model teachers. Districts may also enter into an agreement with one or more other districts or AEAs to meet this requirement through a collaborative arrangement.

**Additional Days:** Model teachers' contracts shall be five days longer than career teachers' contracts and the five additional contract days shall be used to strengthen instructional leadership of model teachers.

**Salary Supplement:** Model teachers shall receive annually a salary supplement of at least \$2,000.

**Duties:** Model teachers teach full-time and serve as models of exemplary teaching practice.

**Mentor Teacher**

**Qualifications:** A mentor teacher is evaluated by the school district as demonstrating the competencies and superior teaching skills of a mentor teacher, holds a valid license issued under chapter 272, participates in teacher professional development, demonstrates continuous improvement in teaching, and possesses the skills and qualifications to assume leadership roles.

**Selection:** Participation in a rigorous review process and selection by a site-based review council (see site-based review council section for a description of the review process).

**Length of Assignment:** One year.

**Participation Percentage and Partnerships:** At least 10 percent of teachers in the school district should be designated as mentor teachers. Districts may also enter into an agreement with one or more other districts or AEAs to meet this requirement through a collaborative arrangement.

**Additional Days:** Mentor teachers' contracts shall be 10 days longer than career teachers' contracts and the 10 additional contract days shall be used to strengthen instructional leadership of mentor teachers.

**Teaching Load:** Mentor teachers shall have a teaching load of not more than 75 percent student instruction to allow the teacher to mentor other teachers.

**Salary Supplement:** Mentor teachers shall receive annually a salary supplement of at least \$5,000.

**Duties:** Not specified in the legislation, which leaves districts with significant discretion in designing the mentor teacher role. As support in thinking about this role, the task force on teacher leadership and compensation described the role of the mentor teacher on page 14 of its final [report](#).

## **Lead Teacher**

**Qualifications:** A lead teacher holds a valid license issued under chapter 272.

**Selection:** Participation in a rigorous review process and selection by a site-based review council (see site-based review council section for a description of the review process). The recommendation from the council must assert that the teacher possesses superior teaching skills and the ability to lead adult learners.

**Length of Assignment:** One year.

**Participation Percentage and Partnerships:** At least 5 percent of teachers in the school district should be designated as lead teachers. Districts may also enter into an agreement with one or more other districts or AEAs to meet this requirement through a collaborative arrangement.

**Additional Days:** Mentor teachers' contracts shall be 15 days longer than career teachers' contracts, and the fifteen additional contract days shall be used to strengthen instructional leadership of model teachers.

**Teaching Load:** A lead teacher shall have a teaching load of not more than 50 percent student instruction to allow the lead teacher to spend time on co-teaching; co-planning; peer reviews; observing career teachers, model teachers, and mentor teachers; and other duties mutually agreed upon by the superintendent and the lead teacher.

**Salary Supplement:** Lead teachers shall receive annually a salary supplement of at least \$10,000.

**Duties:** A lead teacher shall assume leadership roles that may include but are not limited to the planning and delivery of professional development activities designed to improve instructional strategies; the facilitation of an instructional leadership team within the lead teacher's building, school district, or other school districts; the mentoring of other teachers; and participation in the evaluation of student teachers.

**Instructional Coach Model (284.16):** This model includes the beginning teacher, career teacher, and model teacher levels plus two additional leadership levels: instructional coach and curriculum and professional development leader. The descriptions and requirements for beginning teachers, career teachers, and model teachers are the same as the descriptions and requirements for initial, career, and model teachers in the career pathways model (284.15). Please see below for information on the instructional coach and curriculum and professional development leader roles.

<b>Instructional Coach Model</b>	
<b>Instructional Coach</b>	<p><b>Qualifications:</b> An instructional coach, at a minimum, meets the requirements of a career teacher.</p> <p><b>Selection:</b> Assignment of an instructional coach to an individual teacher shall be based on either a request from a principal or from an individual teacher upon approval from a principal. In addition, the selection process for the instructional coach role must also comply with the rigorous selection process requirements described on p. 5.</p> <p><b>Length of Assignment:</b> No length is specified, however, placement as an instructional coach is subject to an annual review by the school's or school district's administration. The review shall include peer feedback on the effectiveness of the teacher's performance of duty specific to the instructional coach role.</p> <p><b>Participation Percentage and Partnerships:</b> Assignment, annually, of at least one instructional coach at each attendance center or at least one instructional coach for every 500 students.</p> <p><b>Additional Days:</b> Instructional coaches' contracts shall be 10 days longer than career teachers' contracts, and the 10 additional contract days shall be used to strengthen instructional leadership of model teachers.</p> <p><b>Teaching Load:</b> Instructional coaches engage full-time in instructional coaching.</p> <p><b>Salary Supplement:</b> Instructional coaches shall receive annually a salary supplement of not less than \$5,000, nor more than \$7,000.</p> <p><b>Duties:</b> Instructional coaches provide additional guidance in one or more aspects of the teaching profession to teachers. Instructional coaching shall include detailed preliminary discussions as to areas in which the teachers being coached desire to improve; formulation of an action plan to bring about such improvement; in-class supervision by the instructional coach; post-class discussion of strengths, weaknesses, and strategies for improvement; and dialogue between the instructional coach and students and school officials regarding the teachers being coached. An instructional coach shall coordinate instructional coaching activities relating to training and professional development with an area education agency where appropriate.</p>

**Curriculum  
and  
Professional  
Development  
Leader**

**Qualifications:** A curriculum and professional development leader, at a minimum, meets the requirements of a career teacher.

**Selection:** Participation in a rigorous review process and selection by a site-based review council (see site-based review council section for a description of the review process).

**Length of Assignment:** No length is specified; however, placement as a curriculum and professional development leader is subject to an annual review by the school's or school district's administration. The review shall include peer feedback on the effectiveness of the teacher's performance of duties specific to the curriculum and professional development leader role.

**Participation Percentage and Partnerships:** There is no goal or required percentage of teachers who must take on this role, but as nearly as possible, the total number of hours of coaching and leadership duties performed by instructional coaches and curriculum and professional development leaders shall be equal to the total number of hours of non-instructional, mentoring, and leadership duties for a school district teaching staff of equal size implementing the teacher career pathways framework (i.e. model 1).

**Additional Days:** Curriculum and professional development leaders' contracts shall be 15 days longer than career teachers' contracts, and the 15 additional contract days shall be used to strengthen instructional leadership of curriculum of model teachers.

**Teaching Load:** The legislation does not specify a required teaching load for this role.

**Salary Supplement:** Curriculum and professional development leaders shall receive annually a salary supplement of not less than \$10,000 nor more than \$12,000.

**Duties:** Curriculum and professional development leaders shall do the following: Provide and demonstrate teaching on an ongoing basis; routinely work strategically with teachers in planning, monitoring, reviewing, and implementing best instructional practice; observe and coach teachers in effective instructional practices; support teacher growth and reflective practices; work with and train classroom teachers to provide interventions aligned by subject area; support instruction and learning through the use of technology; actively participate in collaborative problem solving and reflective practices which include but are not limited to professional study groups, peer observations, grade level planning, and weekly team meetings; plan and deliver professional development activities designed to improve instructional strategies; and engage in the development, adoption, and implementation of curriculum and curricular materials.

## → Requirements Applicable to All Teacher Leadership and Compensation Systems

Regardless of the approach a district selects, a district's plan must meet the minimum requirements described in 284.17 (comparable system criteria) as well as the provisions of section 284.15, subsections 3 through 11, which address the following issues:

- **Salary Supplements:** The salary supplement received by a teacher assigned to a leadership role shall fully cover the salary costs of the additional contract days required of teachers in those leadership roles. Determinations of salary supplements are not subject to appeal.
- **Site-based Review Councils:** The school board shall appoint a site-based review council for the district's attendance centers (attendance centers may share a site-based review council as long as the council is comprised of equal numbers of teachers and administrators). The council shall accept and review applications submitted to the school's or the school district's administration for assignment or reassignment in a teacher leadership role, and shall make recommendations regarding the applications to the superintendent of the school district. In developing recommendations, the council shall utilize measures of teacher effectiveness and professional growth, consider the needs of the school district, and review the performance and professional development of the applicants. Any teacher recommended for assignment or reassignment in a teacher leadership role shall have demonstrated to the council's satisfaction competency on the Iowa teaching standards as set forth in section 284.3. It is up to local school districts to decide how these determinations will be made.
- **Teacher Compensation Requirement:** A teacher employed in a school district shall not receive less compensation in that district than the teacher received in the school year preceding implementation of an approved teacher leadership and compensation system.
- **National Board Certification:** A teacher who achieves national board for professional teaching standards certification and meets the requirements of section 256.44 shall continue to receive the award as specified in section 256.44 in addition to any teacher leadership compensation.
- **Teachers Emeritus:** A school district is encouraged to utilize appropriately licensed teachers emeritus (i.e. retired teachers) in the implementation of its teacher leadership plan.
- **Applicability:** The framework or comparable system approved and implemented by a school district in accordance with this section shall be applicable to teachers in every attendance center operated by the school district. This means that all schools in a district with an approved plan must implement the teacher leadership system.

## → Other Related Items

- **Uses of TLS Funds:** TLS funding can be used to raise the minimum salary in a district to \$33,500, fund the salary supplements for teachers in a leadership role, cover the costs for the time teachers in leadership roles are not providing direct instruction in a classroom, cover the costs when teachers are out of their classroom to observe or co-teach with another teacher, provide professional development related to the leadership pathways and to cover other costs associated with the approved teacher leadership and compensation plan.
- **Open Enrollment:** The Teacher Leadership Supplement will follow the student in the case of open enrollment.

- **Combined Salary Schedule:** Once a school district has an approved plan, the new minimum salary (\$33,500) is incorporated into the combined salary schedule.
- **Department Funding and Support for Districts:** HF 215 allocates not more than \$700,000 to the Department of Education for the development of a delivery system and technical assistance to assist in implementing the career paths and leadership roles with priority to school districts with certified enrollments of fewer than six hundred students. The Department is currently developing a team and process to provide this support and technical assistance to districts. More information will be provided in the early fall of 2013.
- **Chapter 20:** TLS funds received by a school district shall not be considered under chapter 20 in determining a comparison of the wages of teachers in that school district with the wages of teachers in another school district.
- **Supplemental Aid:** Approval of a teacher leadership system and receipt of TLS funds shall not be considered to be unusual circumstances, create an unusual need for additional funds, or qualify under any other circumstances that may be used by the school budget review committee to grant supplemental aid to or establish a modified supplemental amount for a school district.
- **Changes to Approved Plans:** School districts approved to implement a teacher leadership system must submit to the Department for approval any proposed changes to its plan. A school district may then modify or change the approved plan if the director approves the modification. A school district may appeal the director's decision to the state board and the state board's decision is final. In addition, at any time during the school year, a school district may apply to the Department to waive full or partial implementation of their approved plan for the current school year. The state board may adopt by rule a limitation on the number of times a school district may apply for a waiver.
- **Opt-Out Provision:** By **March 1** of the school year preceding implementation, a school district that has been approved to implement a teacher leadership system may opt out of implementation of the plan by notifying the department of its intent to withdraw from implementation. The district will no longer receive the Teacher Leadership Supplement foundation aid.

## **Commission on Educator Leadership and Compensation**

**Duties of the Commission:** HF 215 establishes a Commission on Educator Leadership with a clear set of duties to ensure the successful development and implementation of the Teacher Leadership and Compensation System. These duties include:

- Monitor with fidelity the implementation of the teacher leadership and compensation system by school districts.
- Evaluate and make recommendations to the DE on applications for approval of a framework or comparable system and on the expenditure of money related to the Teacher Leadership and Compensation system.
- Review the use and effectiveness of the funds distributed to school districts for supplemental assistance to high-need schools.
- Submit its findings and recommendations annually by December 15 in a report to the Director, the State Board of Education, the Governor, and the Legislature.

**Commission Membership:** The commission will have 19 voting members, appointed to staggered three-year terms, with the Director of the DE (or the Director's designee) serving as a nonvoting member. HF 215 specifies that the voting members will include: five teachers appointed by the Iowa State Education Association, three school administrators appointed by the School Administrators of Iowa, two school board members appointed by the Iowa Association of School Boards, one person appointed jointly by the administrators of the Area Education Agencies, two teachers appointed by the Director, a parent of a child enrolled in a school district, a business leader, a representative from the largest teacher preparation program in Iowa, the executive director (or designee) of the Iowa State Education Association, the executive director (or designee) of the School Administrators of Iowa, the executive director (or designee) of the Iowa Association of School Boards.

**Legislative Review:** The teacher leadership and compensation will be subject to legislative review at least every three years, beginning on January 15, 2017. The review will be based upon a status report from the commission on educator leadership and compensation.